



"Yes, they were love letters," whispered Helen helplessly. "I can't face it."

Set a *A Mystery Story that proves*
the truth of the Old Adage
Thief to Catch a THIEF

Illustrations by Grant T. Reynard

"YOU'RE not wearing your pearls tonight, Helen; I hardly knew you without them!" said Mrs. Burgess, meeting her niece at the ball which the Peytons were giving on a night in April.

"Oh, you're the third person who's made the same remark!" laughed Mrs. Arnold. "I don't think it at all complimentary. One might think I'm asked to parties merely to show my baubles. You don't feel that way about it, do you, Uncle Web?"

"When you're as stunning as you are tonight the pearls would be superfluous," replied Burgess. "And Jack being out of town, you probably feel that the pearls are entitled to a rest. Out of sight, out of mind; it's the old story!"

"Don't forget," said Mrs. Burgess, "that you're dining with us on your fifth wedding anniversary. It's a week from tonight, isn't it?"

"It's nice of you always to remember the day, Aunt Gertie. Jack expects to be home and we'll be delighted to come."

It was the way of the banker to notice everything and he had instantly marked the absence of the necklace, a wedding gift from Helen's husband, which she had worn so constantly that her friends chaffed her about it.

Helen Arnold was one of the liveliest of the young matrons, as she had been the most popular girl of her set in the Mid-West capital where the Burgesses had been people of importance from territorial times. Her parents dying when she was a schoolgirl, Helen had lived with the Webster Burgesses until her marriage—a marriage that came opportunely just as the girl was in danger of being spoiled by the attentions she was receiving. This was the view entertained by her friends, who loved her for the light-heartedness, the generous impulses and the loveliness of person that had brought her enough offers to turn any girl's head. There were unkind people who declared, not without reason, that Helen had been spoiled and that Jack Arnold was taking chances in marrying a girl to whom admiration was as necessary as bread and meat. Jack was an earnest chap who had gone from college directly into his father's prosperous chemical manufacturing company, and at once caught step with the energetic and public spirited men of the community.

Burgess had been troubled about Helen for the past year. Though she and Jack were apparently very happy and she was devoted to him and their three year old boy, he had observed traces of restlessness in her that greatly disturbed him. Jack

was widening the territory reached by the Arnold products and this called for frequent absences from home. Helen had been seeing a good deal of Reggie Forney, who had been one of her most assiduous wooers before her marriage. Forney was the musically inclined son of a hard headed business man who, after vainly trying to smother the boy's ambitions, set him up in a studio with the stern stipulation that he was to cease pounding the piano at home. This did not, however, preclude attacks upon instruments in other homes where music was tolerated, and as Helen had always been sympathetic with his ambition to become a composer and Jack had provided her house with a music room and a grand piano, Reggie was spending a good deal of time there.

Webster G. Burgess knew everything that went on in town, and he was not at all pleased by Helen's friendship with Forney. Burgess, a successful banker and horseman, devoted to all outdoor sports, had no patience with young men who wear flowing scarfs and too much hair and give recitals of songs of their own composing. Such games as Burgess played he played by the code of good sportsmanship, and if at times he gave protection to criminals with bad records, it was from an honest sense that

pleased him to do so, he would conceal a fugitive from justice on one of his farms, but a man he didn't fancy couldn't do business with his bank. A bank, Burgess said, was like a club, where you have a right to assume your neighbor at table is a gentleman.

Shipton was plausible; he dressed well, and apparently he had money to spend. He was playing the social game as part of his business, and this, in Burgess's code, was indefensible. His appearance at the Peytons' party showed that he was getting on and Burgess speculated grimly as to how he had managed it. He was a good looking fellow of thirty-five or thereabouts; his dress suit was of recent cut and gave him a distinguished air. Burgess was chagrined to find that Helen appeared to be on excellent terms with him.

II

BURGESS had given up dancing, but after standing in the doorway with a group of hopeful young gentlemen who were waiting for a chance to "cut in," he made bold to appropriate



there is good in all men and that the down-and-out are entitled to a second chance.

Helen had been avoiding him, Burgess knew, which was a bad sign in a girl of his own blood with whom he had always been on terms of good comradeship. Not only would he give Helen a fatherly admonition to get rid of Reggie Forney, but he would warn her that it was unbecoming in a young matron to encourage the attentions of other men who, from time to time, became a prey to her charms. Reggie was not at the party, being disdainful of all formal functions, but Burgess saw Helen dancing with Shipton, and this greatly roused his ire.

Franklin B. Shipton had lately turned up in town, ostensibly to organize a company to manufacture paper boxes. Burgess had refused to interest himself in the enterprise and had gone the length of declining Shipton's account for the White River National. Burgess often took long chances, but he had a genius for extricating himself from difficulties, and, win or lose, he made it a rule never to explain his actions in any particular. If it

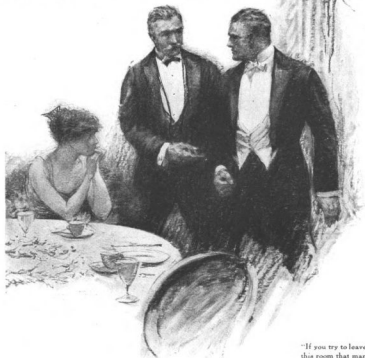
Helen as she tripped past with Shipton for what he considered once too often. His "Beg your pardon" as he took Helen away was distinctly frosty and he was so delighted with the look of rage Shipton gave him that he had difficulty in catching the step, and his awkwardness evoked a mocking laugh from his partner.

"It's the first time you've danced with me since my coming-out party! You must be feeling the devil in your toe tonight."

He had caught the swing, and was dancing quite comfortably now. A look of weariness came into Helen's eyes which he had never seen there before. She knew that he was studying her face, and suddenly, as they passed an open window, her hand

slipped from his shoulder. He saw tears in her eyes and paused. "Let us get some air," he said, and stepped out on the broad veranda.

He found a seat in a quiet corner and went for her cloak. When he came back, she was staring listlessly out across the grounds. "You're not happy," he said, after lighting a cigar and making himself comfortable. "And when you're not fit and wholly up to the mark, I always know it. And when you've been in mischief, I always know that, too, just as though I had caught you in the pantry with the jam pot in your hand. You know I hate



"If you try to leave this room that man at the door will kill you," said Burgess.

like the devil to abuse you, but I've got a scolding in my system that I might as well get out right now. If you're ready, Gridley, I'll begin firing."

Her hand touched his gently and he clasped and held it.

"The good God made you very beautiful, Helen, and clever and kind and generous; but He threw in just a drop of vanity and a dash of willfulness and recklessness. Now, your actions of late have distressed me greatly. With Jack away so much, you haven't been content to sit at home and play the rôle of the good little wife. Of course nobody would expect you to lock yourself in your room—Jack least of all—but there's a safety zone, you know, little girl."

"I know I'm silly and vain and foolish," she answered faintly. "And Jack's so very good to me." Her reference to Jack was tinged with a note of contrition and helplessness that confirmed his suspicion that something serious was afoot.

"I haven't liked your renewed interest in Reggie Forney. Before you were married you used to play round with him, but only when you hadn't better material to work on. I had hoped you were through with him." Then he asked with blunt directness: "He makes love to you, doesn't he? He tells you that no one understands him as you do?"

"He's just a little foolish at times, but he's only a boy. You wouldn't—"

"But I would, you know! With his music and his yearning for sympathy as an excuse, you've been encouraging him to make love to you. He goes to the house rather oftener when Jack's away, doesn't he?"

"But there's nothing in that!" She withdrew her hand resentfully. "You don't think—"

"I'm not thinking. I want all the facts before I do any thinking. I'll mention this, however—that the other afternoon when I was motoring in from the farm, I stopped to look at the new addition I'm laying out next to the country club grounds. I walked down to the edge of the river and saw you and Forney idling along the shore. The workmen were gone from my place and it was pretty late."

She bent toward him eagerly and her voice became a hoarse whisper, so low that he barely heard her.

"You saw—"

"I saw him kiss you, and you didn't resist. To be real brutal about it, you rather invited the demonstration. You didn't even look round to see if anyone was watching you."

"What must you think of me?" she moaned. "It was our good by; I told him I'd never see him again."

"You are the dearest girl in the world," he exclaimed hastily. "But you've been skidding a little. You need your Uncle Web to get you headed straight again. Tonight you've been flirting with this fellow Shipton—yes, it amounts to that. How much have you seen of him?"

"Well," she began reluctantly, "I met him at Mamie Douglass's tea when he first came to town, and he said he'd heard about the portrait Germaine did of me. I asked him to come and see it, and he called the next day when Reggie was there. And a few nights after that I was having the Douglasses for dinner, and Jimmy Orbison failed me at the last minute so I asked Mr. Shipton to fill in. He was a very agreeable guest, and afterward we went up to the music room and I showed him that Chase portrait of mamma that hangs in my room. Two or three of the others were with us. There certainly couldn't be anything wrong in that."

"Broadly speaking, no. But Douglass is always taking up some short skate socially in the hope of getting new business for his bank, so Mamie's introduction doesn't count. The Douglass bank charges off a lot of bad paper every year just because Bob's so anxious to be hospitable to the stranger within our gates. You'd better let the Chamber of Commerce do the honors for the

city. We'll consider Shipton checked off; and, before I leave you tonight, I want to be sure you've seen Reggie Forney for the last time."

Her hands were at her throat playing nervously with a locket that she had worn as a substitute for the pearls. Suddenly she bent toward him and said in a tense tone, so low that he barely heard:

"The necklace has been stolen. That's why I didn't wear it tonight. I can't account for it—it's all so mysterious and—and dreadful!" Her last word died in a convulsive sob.

The confession that the pearls had been stolen roused Burgess instantly. He really knew a great deal about criminals and their ways, and he was already speculating as to the identity of the thief who had filched the necklace. There were specialists who did only big jobs of this kind, and they were the most adroit and resourceful thieves of the underworld.

"When did you discover the loss?"

"Not till tonight, when I was dressing," she answered, with a dejection which the theft in itself did not explain.

"Oh, if that's all that's bothering you, you're taking it too much to heart! Jack isn't going to scold you, not even if you carelessly left your pearls around for a porch climber to pick up."

"No," she moaned, "Jack would be fine about it. But I haven't told you everything. There—there were some of Reggie's letters that I kept in a box with the pearls, and poems he had written me. I'd meant to destroy them but I kept putting it off—"

"They were love letters, were they?" Burgess asked bluntly. "Letters that would give anyone the impression that you had encouraged Reggie to write to you; and the poems were personal—love poems we will say?"

"Yes," she whispered, and sank back helplessly. "I can't face it; I'll kill myself!"

The music had ceased, and several couples lapsed into peering at them curiously. He rose quickly, laughing as though at something she had said. Lifting her to her feet, he steadied her with his arm.

"No one knows of the robbery?" he said in a low tone. "Not the police or any of your servants?"

"No. I didn't dare!"

"How many letters were there?"

"There were ten of them. But I never wrote to him—really I did not!"

"Good!" he ejaculated cheerfully. "I'll take this whole matter off your hands. Gertie's going down to the farm in the morning. I'd planned to go with her but I'll plead business—same old excuse, you know—and offer you as a substitute. Stay on horseback as much as possible. Jack will be home—when did you say?"

"He wired today that he'd try to be back for our—our—"

"Oh, we'll have everything cleaned up for the anniversary!" he replied reassuringly. "It's midnight and the car is here. I'll find Gertie and take you home."

Before they parted he cross-examined her thoroughly as to the robbery and learned just where she had kept the box that had been rifled. The locked drawers of her desk had been opened, she said, but nothing had been touched, indicating that the thief entered the house for the particular purpose he had accomplished. The articles had been taken from a small safe in the closet of her dressing room. She was not

sure whether the safe had been locked—sometimes she was careless and forgot to turn the knob. She thought the robbery had been committed in the daytime. There had been workmen in the house for several days making repairs, and she gave him the name of the contractor.

III

THE next morning Burgess was in his private office at the White River National before the arrival of the mail clerks. He had arranged that Mrs. Burgess and Helen and her young

son were to start at ten on their four hour run to his stock farm where there was a big, comfortable house always in readiness for guests. Having slept soundly and taken a shower, he addressed himself at once to the business of recovering the stolen letters.

He summoned Briggs, a private detective he knew to be trustworthy and discreet, and entrusted to him the careful investigation of the workmen and accepted his suggestion that the servants in the Arnold house be scrutinized.

It was not the necklace but the letters that gave Burgess concern. At the back of his mind the word *blackmail* kept repeating itself disturbingly. His niece's affair with Reggie Forney had been a more serious business than he had imagined. It was bad enough that she had permitted the young musician to write to her, but the folly of keeping his letters passed all bounds. And there was Shipton, with whom she was quite capable of launching upon another affair.

By the time his secretary arrived he had made his plans for action. He called for the letters of introduction which Shipton had presented, and when these were brought from the archives he studied them carefully. Two were from banks in small towns in Colorado—sound institutions, from their last available reports in the reference books. Two others were signed by the presidents of large commercial houses in Denver, and all were on business stationery and in the usual form of such communications. They bore every mark of authenticity, but Burgess determined to satisfy himself on this point and dictated a telegram of inquiry to each of the writers.

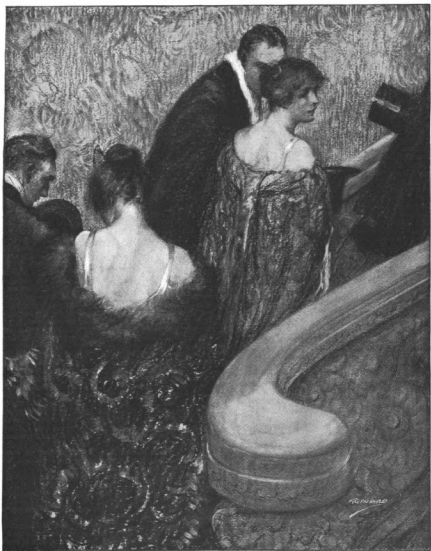
Giving notice that he was out to all callers, he brought from his safety box a small address book and studied it with care. The names entered were in his own hand and were those of crooks of every degree and character, with memoranda of their aliases, last known address, terms of servitude and cryptic notes as to their intelligence.

These were men all personally known to Burgess, and most of them had profited in one way or another by his quixotic kindnesses. A grin crossed his face as his eyes scanned a page that recalled some adventure in which he had taken serious chances in protecting one of these citizens of the underworld from the grasp of sheriffs or deputy marshals

Original from



Helen made sure there was no deception, and then flung the letters upon the flames.



As the Shipton party arrived, their chatter and laughter disturbed for a moment the quiet of the lounging room.

His attention became fixed finally upon a page that bore these memoranda:

James Fanning, alias Galloway, alias Kirby. B. and G. C. Phony Galloway gang, a; 5 Mex. land. Acquitted Pepperton B. M. Pitts. A. Z. Stout, Chi. 1908 ?

This, being interpreted, meant that Fanning of the several aliases was a burglar and general crook who had served a sentence of two years for circulating spurious money for the famous Galloway counterfeiter gang and five years for complicity in a Mexican plantation swindle. He had been indicted for complicity in a conspiracy to blackmail in Pittsburgh, but had escaped punishment. Fanning's intelligence was rated high. The Z indicated that Burgess had found employment for him

with the Stout Contracting Company in Chicago, in 1908; the interrogation mark meant that there was still some doubt as to the sincerity of Fanning's reformation.

Of all the crooks or former crooks he knew, Fanning was the most likely to be of service. He was a man of education, a rogue of charm with a dull humor that had caused Burgess's heart to warm to him. He was a presentable person in any company.

"His work's satisfactory; I have no complaint of him," Stout reported over the long distance telephone. "He's on a job we're doing in Toledo. What's troubling you?"

"Nothing; I'm just lonesome," Burgess answered, in a tone with which his friend was familiar, "and I want to hear Fanning talk."

"You've certainly got the man buffaloed. He'll come running if you want him."

"Wire him to come on the first train," said Burgess, "and tell him to call me up the moment he gets here."

IV

FANNING reached town early the next morning, and Burgess met him for a conference in a room at the Sycamore House.

Burgess had always found men of Fanning's type most responsive when approached in the same straightforward fashion in which he dealt with business men. The ex-convict was even more attractive than he had remembered him, steady of eye and browned by a summer in the open.

"I'm going to tell you a story I wouldn't tell any other man. Briggs doesn't know it all. I'm merely using him on things I don't consider important. The woman in this case has got to be protected. You'll know how I feel about it when I say that I'd give my life to shield her."

Fanning nodded, and his face grew grave as he realized the completeness of his benefactor's confidence.

"You're the squarest man on earth. I'll go clear down the line for you, Mr. Burgess."

In short, crisp sentences Burgess told him all he knew of the robbery, of the danger that lay in the Forney letters and of the importance of acting quickly. When he had finished Fanning asked questions rapidly.

"The blackmail game isn't played by burglars, you know," said Fanning musingly. "You can eliminate this Forney who wrote the letters. In the Pepperton case, my job was to lift some letters the woman decoy had written to the old man, which I did, you may remember, by taking a job as janitor and breaking into his desk. If there's blackmail in this sketch, somebody must have suspected there were letters lying round. The boss of a job like that keeps out of sight and uses other crooks to get his stuff."

"A blackmailer suspecting there might be letters stuck away somewhere would hire a specialist to do the stealing—is that it?" asked Burgess grimly.

"Sure! There was a case like that in Rhode Island two years ago. It was smothered without arrests or publicity. Cooney Sims got the stuff for Oily Jim Harris, who's the smoothest crook in America. Cooney hung out at Rooker's fence in Chicago in the old times when Rooker was protected and flying high. Harris used him to do his dirty work—burglary chiefly. I met Cooney in Toledo about a month ago. He told me he still did a job with Harris occasionally but was going to quit as Harris didn't play fair when it came to the whack-up."

"If Cooney pulled this robbery he wouldn't hang around afterward?"

"You don't know Cooney!" exclaimed Fanning with a chuckle. "That boy's as keen as a trap, and he's worked out a theory for himself that it's always a mistake to hit and run. Hit and sit is his idea, and he's done less time than any man with his record in the country. He's an expert machinist and drops into a town where he's going to pull something and gets an honest job. When he's bagged his stuff he plants it and is back at work the next morning. Sometimes he keeps right on working for a month or two, then drops off the earth."

"If he's in town, what would be your chances of finding him?"

"About even. If he hasn't changed his habits, he'd be boarding in the industrial district with some old widow and being very nice to her, telling her how she reminds him of his mother and even taking her to prayer meeting—that's Cooney. He's a wonder!" concluded Fanning with unfeigned admiration.

He named half a dozen other men in the underworld who might have committed the robbery. Three of them were doing time; the recent history of the others he didn't know.

"But this sounds a good deal like Cooney," he said, after canvassing all the possibilities.

"We've got to be in a hurry about this!" Burgess admonished. "There's a particular reason why I've got to clean this up by next Thursday, and this is Friday."

"Consider that I'm on the job," the ex-convict said, and Burgess left him.

V

AT THE White River National, Burgess found replies to all his inquiries about Shipton. The banks and commercial houses confirmed their letters of introduction and added that Shipton carried good accounts, owned fruit ranches and other property in Colorado and was a reputable citizen.

If there was any conceit in Webster G. Burgess it was the pardonable vanity of one who rarely errs in his judgment of men. He had felt a repugnance to Shipton the first time he met him. The man was too suave, too confident for the banker's taste. On general principles he was mistrustful of masculine good looks, and Shipton was too handsome to suit him.

The necklace and the letters must be got out of the way before Jack Arnold returned. This was the dominant thought in Burgess's mind, and he was not at all satisfied that he was accomplishing anything to this end.

Helen, Burgess assumed, would be given the first chance to buy the letters, and late in the afternoon he went to the Arnold house and explained to the maid that Mrs. Arnold had telephoned him to look for an important letter she expected and which must be forwarded immediately. He might be in every day until it arrived, he said, to pave the way for other visits. The maid produced a number of letters which had come since Mrs. Arnold's departure, but, glancing at the envelopes, he found that he could account for all of them. He pretended interest in some new books he found lying about, and, when the girl left, carefully examined the desk drawers which Helen had said bore marks of having been opened by the thief before he finally found his booty.

Criminals and their ways affected Burgess's imagination powerfully, and he visualized the entrance of the thief by way of the Colonial pillars of the big veranda and his movements as he pried into possible hiding places. Staring absently into the empty fireplace, a bit of crumpled paper in the grating through which ashes were dropped into the cellar caught his eye. He fished it out and spread it open. It was a notesheet with the top torn off and covered with an outline in pencil. Studying it fixedly, he found that it was a diagram of the second story rooms of the house, with the position of the windows over the veranda neatly indicated. It might have been a memorandum discarded by the workmen who had been employed in the house, but his curiosity was roused by something familiar in the paper. As he held it to the light the design of the watermark touched a memory that responded teasingly. He rang for the maid to tell her that he was leaving and was borrowing a novel to carry home.

He drove to the University Club and went to the library, where he sat down at one of the writing tables. There were sheets of paper of various sizes in the rack and one of these corresponded exactly with the scrap he had found in the fireplace. Held to the window, it disclosed the same watermark—a rooster with one foot jauntily lifted.

Jack Arnold frequented the club and he might have drawn the sketch and given it to the contractor who had charge of the work lately done in his house; but the contractor Arnold always employed for such jobs had built the house only a few years earlier and presumably would need no sketch to refresh his memory.

Puzzled and rebellious that he was making no headway, Burgess put the paper away carefully in his bill-fold, with a clean sheet of the club stationery.

At the library door he ran into Shipton, who greeted him cordially.

"Your club library is an ideal refuge—the quietest place in town."

"I'm glad you like it," Burgess replied. "When my wife's away I drop in here to ponder my sins."

"Mrs. Arnold's away, too, I believe," said Shipton carelessly. "I promised to send her an article on Romaine's work that appeared recently. I've found the magazine, and if you'll be good enough to give me her address—"

Burgess's wits were functioning rapidly. He didn't know how long it might be expedient to keep Helen in the country, and yet, if Shipton was more deeply interested in her return than his plausible request implied, it might hasten matters if he gave the impression that she would be back shortly.

"Oh, they're just taking the country air for a day or two. They'll be home Wednesday at the latest."

"Very good; I'll wait for her return, then. Thank you very much."

"You're staying on here for a while?" asked Burgess, offering his cigarette case. "You find our city to your taste?"

"So much so that I may take up my residence here," answered Shipton, extending a lighted match.

"Well, we're always looking for good people," said the banker, with the faintest tinge of irony, and passed on.

(Continued on page 132)



"We pay him \$100 a week"

"AND he's worth every cent of it. Came here several years ago asking for a job. He got just that—a small job at a small salary."

"Then I forgot about him—hardly knew he was on the payroll until one day I got a letter from the International Correspondence Schools telling me that he had enrolled for a course of some study. It was remarkable the way he went ahead."

"We pay him \$100 a week now and he's going to be earning even a larger salary some day. I wish we had more men like him."

HOW do you stand when your employer checks up on his men for promotion? Does he think of you? Is there really any reason why you should be selected? Ask yourself these questions fairly. You must face them if you expect advancement and more money. One hour after supper each night spent with the I. C. S. in your own home will prepare you for the position you want in the work you like best.

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W. L. DOUGLAS

\$5.00 \$6.00 \$7.00 & \$8.00 SHOES FOR MEN AND WOMEN



W. L. Douglas \$7.00 and \$8.00 shoes are absolutely the best shoe values for the money in this country.

All W. L. Douglas shoes are made of the best and finest leathers, by skilled shoemakers, all working to make the best shoes for the price that money can buy. The quality is unsurpassed. The smart styles are the leaders in the fashion centers of America. Only by examining them can you appreciate their wonderful value. Shoes of equal quality cannot be bought elsewhere at anywhere near our prices.

W. L. Douglas shoes are put into all of our 110 stores at factory cost. We do not make one cent of profit until the shoes are sold to you.

WEAR W. L. DOUGLAS SHOES AND SAVE MONEY.

W. L. Douglas \$4.00 and \$4.50 shoes for boys, best in quality, best in style, best all around shoes for boys.

It is worth dollars for you to remember that when you buy shoes at our stores **YOU PAY ONLY ONE PROFIT.**

No matter where you live, shoe dealers can supply you with W. L. Douglas shoes. They cost no more in San Francisco than they do in New York. Insist upon having W. L. Douglas shoes with the name and retail price stamped on the sole. Do not take a substitute and pay extra profits. Order direct from the factory and save money.

Write for Catalog Today
W. L. Douglas Shoe Co.
146 South St., Brockton, Mass.

"After Harris and Cooney for a shot they fooled in Seattle last year. Oily, alias Shipton, was in a box party at the theater the other night with a bunch of swells and Cooney was in the gallery enjoying himself, and he swears he spotted Hedges after the show watching Harris climb into a royal purple limousine with some of your leading citizens. I'd know Hedges myself if I spotted him; he nearly got me once in Denver. Harris is getting careless. He's played the same game for years and never seen the inside of a jail. Cooney hasn't told him the bad news that Hedges is nosing round here. He'll keep that to scare Oily with."

"We've got to work fast. If Hedges arrests Shipton, he'll find those letters and our jig will be up. Cooney's probably skipped already."

"Not Cooney! He gave me the word of an old pal he wouldn't, but you can be dead sure he's covering himself all right. I'd be glad if you'd tell him you appreciate what he's doing." Fanning took up the telephone and gave a number.

"What's that you're calling?"
"The Y. M. C. A.," replied Fanning with a broad grin. "Cooney moved down there as soon as he lamed Hedges."

Having satisfied Cooney that he would be taken care of, Burgess and Fanning lingered at the bank, planning how best to obtain the Forney letters before Hedges could arrest the criminal.

"We'll stroll up to the club and wait till the supper party's over and then get a private interview with Shipton. Or we might search his room while he's entertaining his guests—"

"Not a chance," said the ex-convict, "that he'd leave stuff like that in his room. A man who plays Oily's game is ready to skip any minute, and he's got those letters in his clothes right now. Cooney told me Harris has a bag checked at the station and he keeps a fast rooster at a garage right round the corner from the club."

"Humph! I'd hate like thunder to be obliged to spoil his party!" said Burgess, handling Fanning a pistol.

VIII

THEY were looking over newspapers in the club lounging room when Fanning put out his hand as though reaching for a match and touched Burgess's arm. Behind his newspapers Fanning's lips silently telegraphed "Hedges," and the banker instantly identified the white-haired gentleman who was quietly seating himself as the stranger he had seen earlier. His leisurely manner and calm brown eyes gave no hint of his calling, and he would have passed for a successful business man who thoroughly enjoyed the tranquil atmosphere of a club like the University. Curious as to who had put him up, Burgess strolled into the hall, learned from the doorman that the stranger was a Mr. Holcomb and, looking at the guest book, found that a card had been issued at the request of the local agent of a big casualty company.

At eleven there was a stir in the direction of the ladies' entrance. The Shipton party had arrived, and as they wended their way upstairs their chatter and laughter disturbed for a moment the quiet of the lounging room.

Burgess had argued to himself that if

Why Good Dancers Are Popular

EVERYONE admires and wants to dance with the person who knows the latest steps. There is no need of being a milchcow. By one remarkable new easy method, anyone can learn the current dances in less than a few hours. Much less expensive than from a personal teacher. No music or partner needed. The simple even a child can learn quickly. Always have fun—learn dancing by mail.

Learn one quickly and easily make you an accomplished dancer. It will send you FREE to learn over a lesson in Fox Trot, Sweet's Leading and How to Guide Combination. For mailing of free lesson, send 10c. Learn in private—surprise your friends. But now send for a good dancer soon!

ARTHUR MURRAY, Studio 403, 1065th Ave., N. Y.



She Found A Pleasant Way To Reduce Her Fat

She did not have to go to the trouble of diet or exercise. She found a better way, which aids the digestive organs to turn food into muscle, bone and sinew instead of fat.

She used Marmola Prescription Tablets, which are made from the famous Marmola prescription. They aid the digestive system to obtain the full nutriment of food. They will allow you to eat many kinds of food without the necessity of dieting or exercising.

Thousands have found that Marmola Prescription Tablets give complete relief from obesity. And when the accumulation of fat is checked, reduction to normal, healthy weight soon follows.

All good drug stores the world over sell Marmola Prescription Tablets at one dollar a box. Ask your druggist for them, or order direct and they will be sent in plain wrapper, postpaid.

MARMOLA COMPANY

247 Garfield Bldg., Detroit, Mich.

Beautifully Curly, Wavy Hair Like "Nature's Own"

Try the cure was the Silmerine way—and you'll never again use the ruinous heated iron. The present will disappear altogether.

Liquid Silmerine

Is easily applied with brush. Is neither sticky nor greasy. Perfectly harmless. Serves also as a splendid dressing for the hair. Directions with bottle. At drug and department stores.

Parker-Belmont Powder Compact . . . \$1.00
Parker-Belmont Rose Compact . . . 1.00
Parker-Belmont Beauty Cream . . . 1.00
Parker-Belmont Shampoo (liquid) . . . 1.00
PARKER-BELMONT & CO., 234 O'Connell Ave., Chicago

Don't Worry About Cold Weather Motor Troubles

Get Booklet Number One For Instruction In Winter Maintenance And Operation

SLIPPERY roads, frozen cooling systems, cold engines—these are the annoyances that take the joy out of life for many motorists in the winter time.

Yet really these are needless worries that can be overcome with a little knowledge and a little care. Booklet Number One of Cosmopolitan's Motoring Series, "Suggestions for Winter Operation of Your Car", contains complete instructions for ironing out the cold weather worries that beset the motorist.

The subjects discussed are: Driving and Operating Hints in Snowy Weather to Promote Safety; Protecting the Cooling System; Keeping the Engine Warm; Easy Starting Hints. H. A. Tarantous, Technical Head of Cosmopolitan's Motoring Service Department, is the author of the booklet. He has devoted years of study to all kinds of motor troubles and has been careful to explain every point so that it can be easily understood by the newest driver.

Don't wait until you have cold weather before sending for this booklet. Be forearmed. Send four cents today to the department, and it will be mailed to you postpaid.

This department is ready to help you with any of your motoring problems. Every inquiry receives individual attention. Write us for the information you want, enclosing a self-addressed stamped envelope. The service is free to readers of Cosmopolitan.

About That New Car

IT'S PRETTY hard to decide sometimes just what car is best suited to your needs. Mr. Tarantous puts his experience at your disposal in helping you to decide this question.

Write him—enclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope—telling him how much you want to pay for a car, how you are going to use it and the sort of country you live in. With this information to guide him, he will advise you.

If you want catalogs and instruction books on any of the standard makes, send us two cents in stamps for each one, and they will be mailed postpaid.

About That Old Car

OF COURSE, you are wondering how much of an allowance you can get on the old car if you are going to buy a new one. The used car market reports in file in the department, enable us to tell you what you should get for your present car in your locality. Mark the coupon and return it in a self-addressed stamped envelope.

"The Motorist's Library"

THAT is what these booklets are called by those who own them. They are full of meat for the man who wants to operate his car properly and at the lowest expense. A set in the pocket of your car will come in handy in emergencies. Mark the ones you want on the coupon and send four cents in stamps for each.

- No. 1—Suggestions for Winter Operation of Your Car.
- No. 2—Selection and Care of Tires and Tubes.
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Hedges was really trailing Shipton he would, in all likelihood, wait till the daring rogue had dismissed his guests before confronting him. But the detective's propensity made him anxious, and when Hedges rose and left the room Burgess signaled to Fanning that they would follow.

The Shipton party was already established at a round table. Hedges had again chosen a seat by the door, and the waiter placed Burgess and Fanning at the next table.

"Are you dead sure of him?" asked Burgess in a low tone.

"There's no doubt of it," muttered Fanning with an uneasy shrug.

Half an hour passed. The Shipton party was partaking of an elaborate repast. Shipton's voice rose frequently; he was in high spirits and it was evident, from the merriment of his guests, that they were on capital terms with their host.

"I might go downstairs and send for Shipton and have it out with him," remarked Burgess, who had eaten nothing of the mushrooms he had ordered.

Before Fanning could answer, Hedges, having eaten a salad, looked at his watch, rose and walked toward the Shipton table. He moved slowly, his hands in his trousers' pockets.

"It's insufferably hot in here!" exclaimed Shipton, rising quickly. "Suppose we adjourn to—"

"Stand at the door, Fanning!" said Burgess in a low tone as he rose and moved toward the round table.

The members of the Shipton party had risen, and a woman stifled a scream as Burgess planted himself directly in Shipton's path and thrust him back.

"Before you go, Mr. Shipton, I'll trouble you to hand me a small parcel you have in your pocket. If you try to leave this room that man at the door will kill you."

Hedges' manner continued to be that of a mildly interested spectator, but he took a step closer to the table.

"I think what you want, Mr. Burgess, is in the left hand pocket of Mr. Shipton's dress coat—you'll notice it bulges a trifle."

"What sort of trick is this, Burgess?" demanded one of the men.

"It's an outrage!" cried one of the women hysterically.

Slowly Shipton raised his hand till it touched his breast; then, with a swift gesture, it went to his hip.

Fanning was crossing the room in catlike leaps, playing his gun upon Shipton. But Hedges had become a man of action. Snatching a water bottle he flung it across the table, the broad end striking Shipton squarely in the face. As he crumpled up, Burgess pounced upon him.

"I suggest that you all retire as quietly as possible," said Hedges. "Something is about to happen that may be very painful to Mr. Shipton's friends."

When they had gone, he motioned to Fanning to close the doors.

"Now, Mr. Burgess, get what you want and I'll explain my own presence here."

The prisoner's face was bleeding where the heavy glass had struck him, but he was conscious and squirming under Burgess's knees. The banker thrust his hand into his pocket and drew out a long envelope. At a word from Hedges, Fanning jerked Shipton to his feet.

"I'm glad, Mr. Burgess, that our interests in no wise conflict," said the detective.



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"There should be ten letters in that envelope. I took the liberty of entering Shipton's room last night, and I took that pocket to my own room and glanced at the contents and put it back. Through discreet inquiries I made today I judged that the person to whom these letters were written is near and dear to you. I understand the situation perfectly. That man lying there has been practicing this game a little too long. You may know that he passes in Colorado for an honorable man, carries excellent letters of introduction. He has got rich by blackmail and other tricks equally deplorable. My warrant is for an old offense—the sale of forged securities in Oregon. So, Fanning, you may say to your friend Cooney that I shan't need him in this particular case. Please give Cooney my love with a gentle hint to follow your noble example and live straight."

He produced a pair of handcuffs, slipped them over Shipton's wrists and, accompanied by Burgess and Fanning, drove to the central police station, where he displayed his extradition papers and borrowed a plainclothes man to accompany him and his prisoner to Portland.

At the station gates Hedges shook hands with Burgess and said with a smile: "I'm under great obligations to you for your assistance. I was anxious to catch this train, and I walked down the dining room merely to hasten the dispersion of the party. Your eagerness to get the letters before I pinched him forced my hand; but all's well that ends well!"

Before breakfast the next morning Burgess had called the farm and bidden Mrs. Burgess and Helen motor home at once. He was at the Arnold house at five and found Helen impatiently awaiting him.

"I told you I'd get them and I never tell a lie," he said cheerfully, and handed her the envelope containing Forney's letters. "Please see that they are all there."

She counted them, peered into the envelopes of several to make sure there was no deception, walked to the fireplace and flung them upon the flames.

"I hope this hasn't caused you a lot of trouble, Uncle Web," she said. "You were just in time, for Jack telephoned from the office an hour ago that he's back."

"Good!" he ejaculated. "And of course you're coming to our house tomorrow night for your anniversary dinner. And here are your pearls."

"You must have spent a lot of money to get them back," she said, taking the necklace and slipping the pearls slowly through her fingers.

"Well, the experience was an interesting one, so I'll pay all the bills. I've got a new crook to find a job for; that's on my mind right now."

"You don't mean—"
"Oh, not your friend Shipton! You'll learn all you need to know about him when you get time to read the papers." Then, very gravely, he added, as he took the necklace and laid it about her neck: "No more foolishness. Be a good little girl. Kiss me—that's Jack's key in the door!"

Another Meredith Nicholson story, with all the Mid-westerner's warm human knowledge—you will find it in a forthcoming COSMOPOLITAN.

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